

# HEAT ALERT

## Watch Out For The Heat Wave:

When temperatures are 90 degrees and higher, we must be very careful not to become victims of heat exposure. Hot, humid temperatures can cause many medical problems, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat stroke, especially if you are very young, elderly, overweight, or homeless. It is important to check on the homeless, as well as elderly or disabled relatives and neighbors or friends. Also, it is important to keep a close watch on infants and younger children and to make sure they drink adequate amount of liquids to prevent dehydration and other heat-related illnesses. Your chances of getting sick in hot weather are increased by:

- Drinking alcoholic beverages
- High blood pressure
- Problems with circulation
- Diabetes
- Previous stroke
- Infection or fever
- Diarrhea
- Weak or damaged heart
- Improper air ventilation
- Skin diseases or sunburn which may reduce sweating
- Asthma and other respiratory conditions
- Taking certain medications (check with your doctor)

## What Are The Warning Signs?

- Headache
- Nausea, clamminess, chills
- Weakness or fatigue
- Dizziness or periods of faintness
- Rapid breathing

- High body temperature
- Dry, hot skin
- Severe muscle pain (arm, leg)
- High blood pressure
- Anxiety and listlessness
- Unconsciousness

## What Should You Do If You See A Warning Sign?

- Stay calm
- Call a doctor or an ambulance (9-1-1)
- Lie the victim on his or her back
- Loosen victim's clothing or remove as much clothing as possible
- Give victim sips of water- only if victim is alert and can swallow
- Raise victim's feet about a foot from the ground
- Fan the victim's skin
- Apply cool, wet cloths to victim's skin
- Move victim to a cool area if possible
- Avoid massaging victim's muscle cramps
- Avoid using heat packs

## How To Prevent Heat Illnesses:

- Drink plenty of fluids- plain water is good
- Avoid hot and heavy meals
- Avoid strenuous outdoor activities
- Try to sit in a shady area
- Wear a hat and loose clothing ( light colored )
- Avoid alcoholic or beverages with caffeine
- Stay out of the sun as much as possible
- Visit a cooling center in your area (call the helpline for locations)

## Helpful Telephone Numbers:

Heat Emergency Helpline: (202) 673-6800  
Homeless Hotline: 1-800-535-7252  
Medical Emergency: 9-1-1

